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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/661,532	09/15/2003	Jeffrey L. Dalton	20002.0095A	8029
23517	7590	03/29/2005	EXAMINER	
SWIDLER BERLIN LLP 3000 K STREET, NW BOX IP WASHINGTON, DC 20007		BUTTNER, DAVID J		
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
		1712		

DATE MAILED: 03/29/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/661,532	DALTON ET AL.	
	Examiner David Buttner	Art Unit 1712	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 28-33 and 35-41 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 28-33 and 35-41 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

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Only parent application 9-962644 support the Shore D restrictions on the inner and outer covers. The effective filing date for claims 28-33 and 41 is 9/26/01.

The status of the parent applications must be updated at the beginning of the specification.

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 28-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the Rajagopalan '658 Patent in combination with Sullivan '831.

Rajagopalan suggests (col 6 line 25-35) blends of at least one ionomer with grafted metallocene polymers. The blend can be used as a golf ball cover (abstract). The golf ball can be a three piece ball if a mantle is included (abstract). The mantle can be formed from any suitable polymeric material (col 7 line 25). The reference does not provide any instructions regarding the relative hardness of the mantle (i.e. inner cover) and outer cover or specific mantle compositions.

It is known that a hard inner covers of combined with a soft outer cover provides enhanced distance and good feel (Sullivan col. 6 lines 30-34). These hard inner covers are typically blends of different ionomers (Sullivan' table 13). It would have been obvious to employ a hard ionomer blend inner cover and a softer outer cover when producing the Rajagopalan ball.

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Note that Sullivan (col. 15 line 21, 29) suggests his outer cover can be a metallocene polyolefin and blends of ionomer and nonionomers.

Claim 35 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 as claiming the same invention as that of claim 17 of prior U.S. Patent No. 6414082. This is a double patenting rejection. The patent's "mantle" is indistinguishable from the applicant's "layer".

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 28-33 rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-30 of U.S. Patent No. 6653403. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the patent also claims three layer golf balls having a cover that is a blend of grafted metallocene polymer with ionomer (eg claim 1). The ionomer can be a combination of ionomers (eg claim 12). The core can be free of organic sulfides (eg claim 22). The inner cover can be harder than the outer cover (eg claim 23). It is clear that the claims are intended to permit the inner cover to be a blend of ionomers (col 31 line 12).

Claims 35-41 rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-40 of U.S. Patent No. 6414082. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the patent also claims three layer golf balls having one layer of grafted metallocene, ionomer and nonionomer (see claims 1 and 17).

Claims 35-41 rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-33 of U.S. Patent No. 5981658. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the also claims golf balls of grafted metallocene polymer, and at least one of an ionomer or non-ionic polymer (claim 4). This suggests a combination of all three. The balls can have a mantle layer (claim 18) which would result in a threee layer ball.

Claims 35-41 rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-25 of U.S. Patent No. 6384136. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the patent also claims (#13) golf balls of grafted metallocene polymer, ionomer and non grafted metallocene (typically a nonionomer). The ball can have three layers (claim 18).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David Buttner whose telephone number is 571-272-1084. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays from 10 to 5pm.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Randy Gulakowski, can be reached on 571-272-1302. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

D. Buttner
3/21/05

DAVID J. BUTTNER
PRIMARY EXAMINER
David Buttner